



# Wisconsin

## *Resource Management Plan*

Milwaukee District Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MILWAUKEE DISTRICT OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 631  
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53201-0631

### *The Bureau of Land Management*

The Bureau of Land Management, an agency of the U.S. Department of the Interior, administers America's public domain lands and its Federal mineral resources.

Well-known in the Western United States where it manages vast rangelands and extensive mineral resources, the Bureau has fewer holdings in the East. The Bureau is the successor to the General Land Office, which disposed of most of the public domain during the nineteenth century through statehood grants, homestead claims, sales and a variety of special Acts of Congress. Now, most of the public domain tracts which remain in the Eastern half of the country are primarily small islands in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. A very few small tracts are widely scattered in several other Eastern states.

The primary mission of the Bureau in the East remains minerals management. The Bureau issues exploration permits, leases and drilling permits, and oversees operations, for all Federally-owned mineral estate regardless of surface ownership. Most of the Eastern Federal minerals are under the National Forests, managed by the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some Federal mineral holdings underlie surface owned by state or local governments or private individuals. Policy and procedures require environmental analysis and surface owner consultation prior to all permitting activities.

Another active Bureau program is the wild horse and burro adoption program. Excess wild horses and burros from the Western rangelands are available for adoption by the public at nominal fees. Adoptions are conducted periodically at centers throughout the Eastern States.

To adopt a wild horse or burro, or for further information on other Bureau of Land Management activities in the East, write to the Milwaukee District Manager at the above address.

The Milwaukee District Office is responsible for management of public domain land and Federal minerals in the following 20 states: Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Wisconsin and West Virginia.



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

EASTERN STATES OFFICE

350 South Pickett Street

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22304

IN REPLY REFER TO:

### RECORD OF DECISION WISCONSIN PLANNING ANALYSIS and ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

This document records the decisions reached by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for managing 4,200 surface acres of public land and 152,000 subsurface acres in the State of Wisconsin.

#### DECISION

The decision is made to approve the attached plan as the planning analysis for public lands and Federal minerals administered by the BLM in the State of Wisconsin. This plan was prepared under the regulations for implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 CFR 1600). An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared for this plan in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. This plan is identical to the one set forth in the proposed plan and associated environmental assessment published on February, 1985 except for the following modifications:

- The language of Section II.A.1. to indicate who may receive transfer of lands has been changed so that it is clear an Indian tribe is included in "public body or non-profit entity"
- The land disposal criteria (Appendix A) have been modified to include Indian tribes.

These modifications are a result of a protest the BLM received on the proposed plan.

#### CONSISTENCY

This plan is consistent with the plans, programs, and policies of other Federal agencies and of State and local governments.

#### ALTERNATIVES

The approved plan provides for transfer from Federal ownership of all remaining public land surface administered by the BLM in Wisconsin and active management of the Federal mineral estate based on production potential.

In addition to this preferred alternative, the environmental assessment for this action also evaluated a "no action" alternative, which would have provided for continued custodial management.

#### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Surface disposal provisions of the preferred alternative were found to be environmentally preferable since they would result in identification of surface values and would attempt to place these values under appropriate



management. The mineral development provisions would provide better management control over the pace of development and mitigation of impacts than would be possible under the "no action" alternative.

Neither the preferred nor the "no action" alternative were found to have any significant environmental effects.

#### MITIGATION

The plan has been designed to avoid or minimize environmental harm where practicable. Specific mitigation measures in accordance with existing laws, regulations, and other requirements will be designed on a tract-by-tract basis as needed.

#### MONITORING

Monitoring will be performed as needed. The exact monitoring program will be dependent upon the conditions of the tract-specific action that occurs.

#### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The views of the public have been sought throughout the planning and decisionmaking process. Public comments on the proposed plan were generally very favorable. A number of private parties opposed any direct sale to foreign interests. Comments received from Federal agencies, regional planning councils, county governments, and environmental groups supported selection of the preferred alternative. A single protest to the plan resulted in the modifications noted above under "Decision."

#### PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF THIS DOCUMENT

Additional copies of the Wisconsin Planning Analysis are available on request at the Bureau of Land Management, Milwaukee District Office, P.O. Box 631, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201, or (414) 291-4400.

August 29, 1985  
Date

G. Curtis Jones, Jr.  
G. Curtis Jones, Jr.  
State Director  
Eastern States Office  
Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

WISCONSIN PLAN

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE PLAN

This document contains resource management decisions for Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administered lands and minerals resources in the State of Wisconsin. This planning effort is the culmination of an effort begun in 1982 as the Wisconsin Multiple-Use Plan.

The primary reason for preparing the Wisconsin Plan was to initiate an active management posture with regard to Public Domain lands and Federal minerals. Public domain lands are those which have never left Federal ownership.

The known public domain tracts consist of 815 islands, 7 upland tracts and 5 lake or river lots, totaling approximately 4,200 acres. These are tracts which were left in Federal ownership after the other more desirable lands were placed in State or private ownership during settlement. The tracts include both surface and mineral estate ownership. The tract acreage is scattered throughout 59 Wisconsin counties. The public domain tracts include both surface and mineral estate ownership.

The Federal mineral ownership addressed in this plan consists of numerous scattered tracts of Federal mineral estate under surface owned by the State, local units of government, and the private sector. This "split-estate" Federal mineral ownership totals approximately 148,000 acres. The public domain mineral estate (above) is also considered in this plan. Thus, the total Federal mineral ownership under consideration is approximately 152,000 acres. This acreage is scattered throughout 67 Wisconsin counties.

It is important to recognize that the Wisconsin Plan is not a land use plan for private, State, or other (non-BLM) Federal agency resources. In Wisconsin, the majority of BLM administered mineral ownership as mentioned above is "split-estate". BLM administers part or all of the mineral estate, but has no jurisdiction over the surface estate. Since BLM does not manage the surface over these Federal minerals, the Wisconsin Plan does not contain decisions pertaining to use of "split-estate" surface. In addition to Federal mineral ownership acreage addressed in this document, the BLM also has minerals management responsibility on approximately 1.2 million acres of other Federal agency administered surface (e.g., Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Corp of Engineers) in the State.

The surface managing agencies retain full authority to manage their programs and surface resources, even though BLM administers the underlying mineral estate.

II. PLANNING ISSUES AND DECISIONS

The two planning issues addressed in this plan are lands disposal and minerals development. The bases for resolution of these issues were

addressed in the Wisconsin Preplan and other planning documents which are available for public inspection at the Milwaukee District Office.

The Wisconsin Plan was prepared in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, Bureau planning regulations at 43 CFR 1601 et seq., Bureau Manual Sections 1601-1632 and State Director Guidance for Planning in the Eastern States Office. Existing information, developed chiefly during the management situation analysis for this planning effort, was used as much as possible.

A. Lands Disposal

1. Plan Decision

All BLM surface tracts are categorized for disposal and will be evaluated on a tract-by-tract basis against the criteria in Appendix A. Appendix A describes surface disposal options and criteria. Where possible, the preferred method of disposal will be by transfer to another public body or non-profit entity (including Indian tribes). Where subsequent site-specific analysis reveals no interest by another public or non-profit body, BLM tracts may be offered through sale or exchange to private ownership. Tracts will be retained under BLM administration only where sensitive or unique resource values merit continued public management and no other public or non-profit entities are available or willing to assume jurisdiction. Management of retained tracts will be custodial. Preference for sale or transfer may be readjusted based on policy changes, as well as on site-specific analysis. If additional BLM surface tracts are revealed in the future, they will also be evaluated and categorized for disposal.

2. Implementation

The following actions will be necessary to implement this alternative:

- a. Subsequent to plan approval, each tract will be scheduled for an on-site inspection and evaluation of renewable and mineral resource values and uses, resolution of occupancy or title conflict situations if any, and potential for transfer or sale. Sale terms and deed restrictions, if necessary, will reference applicable local or State land use requirements.
- b. Any unauthorized use (occupancy), Color-of-Title or title conflict situation will be resolved prior to any other implementing action.

- c. A land report will be prepared for each tract or related groups of tracts to present findings and recommend a preferred transfer option. The various transfer options available include:
  - (1) Recreation and Public Purposes Act lease or sale;
  - (2) Withdrawal on behalf of another Federal agency;
  - (3) Exchange between another Federal agency and a third party (private, State or local government);
  - (4) Color-of-Title patent for occupants who satisfy the requirements of the Color-of-Title Acts; and
  - (5) Sale.
- d. A site-specific environmental analysis will be prepared for each tract (or related groups of tracts) to evaluate the potential effects of the preferred transfer option and reasonable alternatives. Copies of the environmental analysis will be made available to interested parties on a request basis.
- e. Prior to any final transfer, a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) will be published in the Federal Register and general circulation newspapers to provide 45 days public notice and opportunity to comment on the action.

B. Minerals Development

1. Plan Decision

The minerals management areas and objectives in Appendix B are adopted to guide minerals management in Wisconsin. The boundaries of the management areas (Map A) may be adjusted based on new resource data. If additional Federal mineral ownership is revealed in the future, it will also be managed within these guidelines. All exploration and development proposals will be evaluated on a site-specific basis.

All Federal mineral ownership is available for exploration and development except where legal or intergovernmental consistency requirements, administrative or Congressional designations, or surface resource sensitivity prohibit such activities.

2. Implementation

The following actions will be necessary to implement this alternative:

- a. Subsequent to plan approval, action planning will be pursued on a commodity-specific basis to develop specific management guidelines within each management class. Action

planning will prioritize and schedule lease sales where appropriate.

- b. The comprehensive inventory of Federal mineral ownership status, currently underway in coordination with State and other Federal agencies, will continue to determine exact locations and descriptions of mineral ownership and its availability for development.
- c. Mineral leasing and development authorizations will in every case be preceded by environmental analysis, consultation with the surface owner and joint on-site inspections if appropriate, to evaluate the effects of the proposed action and any reasonable alternatives. Environmental analyses will be done at the leasing and pre-drilling stages for oil and gas development.
- d. Stipulations or conditions of approval will be attached to authorizations as appropriate to ensure resource conservation, to protect threatened or endangered species or cultural resource values, and to otherwise comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- e. Periodic monitoring and inspections will be conducted to ensure compliance with the terms of authorizations and to mitigate any unforeseen consequences of development.



## APPENDIX A

### Surface Disposal Options and Criteria

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been concerned with the need for land adjustment for many years. The public land pattern in Wisconsin is fragmented, with approximately 4,200 acres existing in a scattered pattern of relatively small tracts consisting mostly of river or lake islands.

BLM is authorized to enter into land adjustments through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and other public land laws. The principle also applies to adjustments in the mineral estate of lands, particularly where there is a split-estate situation with Federal mineral estate and privately owned surface, or vice versa.

Major types of land adjustment concerning BLM in the planning area are:

1. Recreation and Public Purposes Transfers,
2. Public Sales,
3. Withdrawals,
4. Complex Multi-Party Exchanges, and
5. Color-of-Title Act Patents.

In implementing this plan in Wisconsin, BLM will be especially concerned with improving management of public values and resources. This involves more than simply disposing of isolated parcels. The Bureau's disposal decisions will be made after site-specific analysis and study of land use potential.

Realty actions are designed to meet FLPMA and National Environmental Policy Act requirements, and to implement BLM planning decisions effectively. The overall goal of the program is to improve public land management through a variety of methods, including sale, exchange, or other methods of transfer.

#### I. Land Pattern Disposal Criteria

These criteria are designed to provide the manager flexibility in responding to circumstances which dictate the final disposition of each tract. Although this plan calls for disposal of all tracts in Wisconsin, each tract will be evaluated against the following criteria to confirm that disposal is appropriate and to determine the method of disposal.

##### A. Disposal

Lands with the following characteristics will be sold, exchanged or transferred in the public interest:

1. Lands of limited or no public value.

2. Widely scattered parcels which are difficult or uneconomical for BLM to manage with anything beyond minimal custodial administration.
3. Lands with high public values proper for management by other Federal agencies, State or local government or Indian tribes.
4. Lands which will serve important public objectives (such as community expansion) as provided in FLPMA Sec. 203(a)(3).
5. Lands which are not required for specific public purposes.
6. Lands where disposal would increase the range of economic opportunities provided to the general public.
7. Lands in which the highest value or most appropriate long-term use is agriculture, or commercial or industrial development.
8. Lands without legal public access.

B. Retention

Lands with the following characteristics will remain in Federal ownership and be managed by BLM.

1. Areas where disposal of the surface would unnecessarily interfere with the logical development of the mineral estate, e.g., surface minerals, coal, phosphate, known geologic structures, etc.
2. Public lands withdrawn by BLM or other Federal agency for which the purpose of the withdrawal remains valid.

## APPENDIX B

### Minerals Management Areas and Objectives

The entire State has been classified into Management Areas I, II, III or IV representing various mineral development potential categories. The enclosed Map A illustrates the general location of these areas.

The classifications presented here are not generally of sufficient detail for use as actual mineral potential evaluations. If mineral related activities or disposal actions are proposed for a tract of Federal land, detailed studies, which may involve exploratory operations, must be undertaken to assess the area-specific value of any minerals present. Furthermore, public domain hard-rock minerals in the State of Wisconsin are not currently available for lease or location under existing law. Unless Congress enacts legislation providing for the leasing or disposal of these minerals, they will remain unavailable for development. Congressional action may be initiated in the future as a result of an increase in industry interest in these minerals.

The following are the definitions and objectives for each of the four classes of management areas:

#### I. Class I Management Area (High Resource Potential)

##### A. Definition

1. Those areas known to host mineral deposits of present economic interest, including exploration or production interest.
2. Those areas suspected to host mineral deposits based on geologic similarities to areas of present economic interest.

##### B. Objectives

1. Retain Federal mineral ownership.
2. Maintain availability of Federal mineral ownership for mineral exploration and development, contingent upon protection of surface values and formulation of a leasing mechanism.
3. Cooperate with and assist other Federal agencies, State and local government bodies and other entities in mineral leasing and regulatory activities.
4. Actively determine Federal mineral ownership in response to prospecting permit applications.
5. Conduct valuable discovery and preference right leasing determinations in conjunction with Eastern States Office.

II. Class II Management Areas (Moderate Resource Potential)

A. Definition

1. Those areas known to host mineral deposits of past economic interest.
2. Those areas suspected to host mineral deposits, based on known occurrences, appropriate geological settings, or geological similarities to areas of past economic interest.

B. Objectives

1. Retain Federal mineral ownership.
2. Make Federal lands available for oil and gas exploration (through non-competitive leasing) and solid mineral prospecting contingent upon environmental and procedural reviews.
3. Determine Federal mineral ownership and resolve mineral title conflicts in response to prospecting permit and oil and gas non-competitive lease application.
4. Pursue curative actions for existing legislation to allow leasing and development of solid minerals under public domain.

III. Class III Management Areas (Low Resource Potential)

A. Definition

Those areas having little or no mineral production potential, although minerals or mineral materials may be present in subeconomic amounts.

B. Objectives

1. Federal mineral estate may be available for disposal, contingent upon site-specific mineral inventory to be made prior to disposal.
2. Determine Federal mineral ownership and its status (leased, non-leased or permitted).
3. Resolve mineral title conflicts in response to mineral leasing and permitting applications.

IV. Class IV Management Area (Common Variety Minerals and Mineral Materials)

A. Definition

Those areas known or suspected to host deposits of sand, gravel, stone, clay, or other commodity which is:

1. Useful and valuable for purposes which could be served by other varieties of the same commodity; and
2. Of no higher intrinsic value than similar material from other deposits (value may be significantly altered by deposit size or setting, by depth of overburden, by distance to transportation networks, markets, or sites of use, or by other external factors).

The difference between common and uncommon varieties of minerals is important and difficult to determine in some cases. The Class IV Management Areas denote deposits of common variety (salable) minerals, but may contain Class I or II Management Areas. should uncommon varieties of sand, gravel, stone, or clay be discovered on Federal lands, those lands will be treated as Class I or Class II Management Areas.

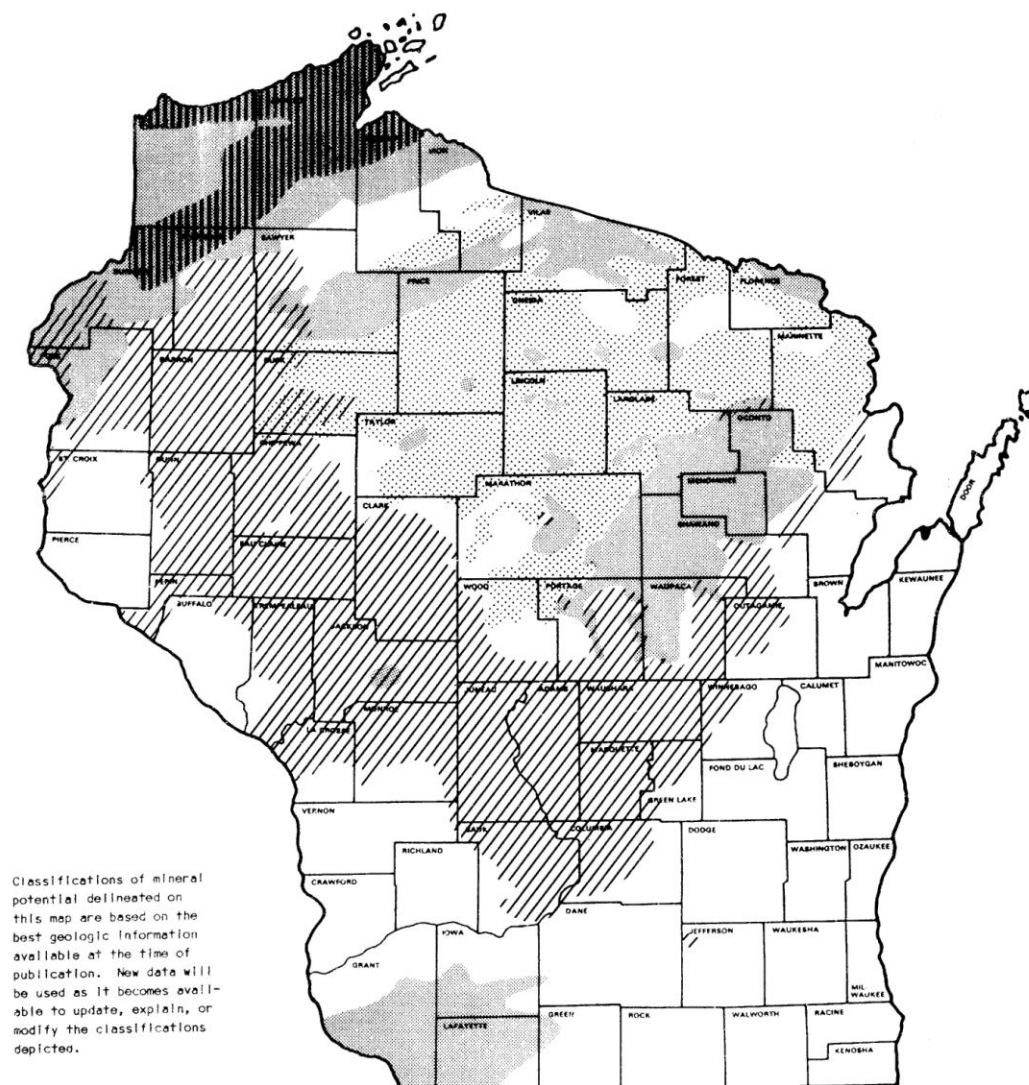
Class IV management areas are considered to occur throughout the State.

B. Objectives





1. Federal mineral estate may be available for disposal, contingent upon site-specific mineral inventory to be made prior to disposal.
2. Requests for sale of Federal common variety minerals will be processed on a case-by-case basis. No attempts will be made to generate interest in purchases of Federal common variety mineral deposits.
3. The Forest Service maintains responsibility for sales and regulation of activities for common variety minerals on National Forest lands.
4. Determine Federal mineral ownership and its status (leased, non-leased or permitted).
5. Resolve mineral title conflicts in response to commodity sales requests.




MAP A. MINERAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS-WISCONSIN



Classifications of mineral potential delineated on this map are based on the best geologic information available at the time of publication. New data will be used as it becomes available to update, explain, or modify the classifications depicted.

- CLASS 1**
-  **High Resource Potential (Solid Minerals)**
- CLASS 2**
-  **Moderate Resource Potential (Non-Metals)**
  -  **Moderate Resource Potential (Metals)**
  -  **Moderate Resource Potential (Oil & Gas)**

- CLASS 3**
-  **Low Resource Potential (Solid Minerals)**

Note: Overlaps of classes are significant.